

Affordable housing for young workers

As young workers begin their career or move up the corporate ladder, their desire to move into independent living grows. However, this important milestone in a young person's life is often hindered by the increasing house prices in Sydney.

Recent research shows that nationally 8.1% of young single households in Australia ages 21-25 are in after-housing poverty – that is, after the cost of their housing is taken into consideration, their remaining income places them below the poverty line.

The private rental market is a major source of housing for young people, yet they continue to report discrimination as landlords and real-estate agents frequently question young people's ability and lifestyle to meet rental obligations. As a result young people pay the premium for housing to negate these assumptions.

At the moment, young people under 25 comprise 4% of all home owners nationally and in the years to come young people are increasingly less likely to buy their own homes.

The design problem demands affordability for young workers and poses two questions. How will this be achieved? How will we attract and sustain young workers to live in these affordable housing?

Firstly, I believe affordability can be achieved through industrial constructions, as affordability is normally associated with the cost of the building. If we were able to reduce the cost in building (in efficiency, materials or labour), then developers or builders would have a bigger profit margin thus allowing cheaper prices on housing. In saying this, I intend not to demolish the existing commercial buildings located on Crown Street and retain the existing concrete slab that is currently situated on the proposed site. By retaining the commercial buildings adjacent to the site, I will be able to use them as part of the support for my structure for example air port or cable structures etc.

In attracting and sustaining young workers, I believe in creating an icon and a vibrant neighbourhood for them. Affordable housing has always been associated with

cheap, ugly and socio-economic. There is a need to steer away from these connotations to a radical and vibrant identity for affordable housing to attract young workers. In recent observations, vibrancy and vitality is one of the most important focus areas for young and emerging workers. Young workers want to feel “connected” as to feeling isolated. They want social and professional outlets and opportunities to connect with other young workers in the community. In order to achieve this, I will be focusing on finding ways to connect the proposed site to the most active street frontage – Crown Street.

In concluding, I believe in providing affordable housing along with a vibrant neighbourhood for young workers as they bring the city and community with social stability and economic benefits.